[specified] <u>provided</u> relation type, and iv) relation instance table means comprised of at least one relation instance record which defines a relation of said [specified] <u>provided</u> relation type between said [selected] <u>desired</u> entity instance record and a [specified] <u>provided</u> entity instance record, wherein said entity definition table means, said entity instance table means, said relation definition table means and said relation instance definition means are part of a relational database;

means, operatively coupled to said relation definition table means, <u>using said provided relation type,</u> for retrieving from said relation definition table means said relation type record defining said [specified] <u>provided</u> relation type;

means, operatively coupled to said relation definition table retrieving means and to said relation instance table means, <u>using said relation type record,</u> for retrieving from said relation instance table means [said] <u>a specific</u> relation instance record <u>containing said provided relation type and said provided entity instance record,</u> wherein said [selected] <u>desired</u> entity instance record is specified in said <u>specific</u> relation instance record by a [selected] <u>desired</u> entity type and a <u>desired entity</u> record identifier;

means, operatively coupled to said relation instance retrieving means and said entity definition table means, <u>using said desired entity type,</u> for retrieving from said entity definition table means [said] <u>a desired</u> entity type record defining said [selected] <u>desired</u> entity type; and

means, operatively coupled to said entity type record retrieving means and said entity instance table means, <u>using said desired entity type and said desired record identifier,</u> for retrieving from said entity instance table means said [selected] <u>desired</u> entity instance record;

wherein [said] a desired entity instance table

[means] is specified by said [retrieved] desired

entity type record and

further wherein said [selected] desired entity

instance record is a record identified by said

desired entity record identifier in said entity

instance table means.

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70. (Amended) The relational database processing system

of Claim 69 wherein said [retrieved] relation type record

defining said provided relation type further comprises a table

identifier, wherein said table identifier identifies a specific

relation instance table containing said specific relation

instance in said relation instance table means; and

further wherein said means for retrieving a relation

instance record further comprises means for retrieving

from said specific relation instance table a relation

instance record having data identifying said [specified]

provided entity instance record and said [selected]

desired entity instance record.

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71. (Amended) The relational database processing system

of Claim 69 wherein said memory means further contains inquiry

table means comprised of at least one inquiry record, wherein

said inquiry record specifies said [specified] provided

relation type and said [specified] provided entity instance

record, said relational database processing system further

comprising:

means, operatively coupled to said inquiry table

means and said relation definition table retrieving means,

for retrieving from said inquiry table means said inquiry

record[.]; and

means, operatively coupled to said inquiry record

retrieving means and said relation instance retrieving means, for retrieving from said inquiry record said provided relation type and said provided entity instance record from said inquiry record; and

    means, operatively coupled to said provided relation type and said provided entity instance retrieving means and said relation instance retrieving means, for providing said provided entity instance and said provided relation type to said relation instance retrieving means.

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82.   (Amended) A computer method for retrieving a [selected] desired entity from a relational database wherein said [selected] desired entity is related to a [specified] provided entity by a [specified] provided relation type, said method comprising:

    retrieving from relation definition table means, which comprises at least one relation type record defining a relation type, of said relational database a specific relation type record wherein said specific relation type record defines said [specified] provided relation type;

    retrieving from relation instance table means corresponding to said specific relation type record of said relational database, based on said specific relation type record and said provided entity, a specific relation instance record defining a relation of said [specified] provided relation type between, said [specified] provided entity and said [selected] desired entity wherein said relation instance record specifies said [selected] desired entity by a [selected] desired entity type and a desired record identifier;

    retrieving from entity definition table means of said relational database, based on said desired entity type and

said desired record identifier, a[n] desired entity type record wherein said [retrieved] desired entity type record defines said [selected] desired entity type and specifies a[n] desired entity instance table of said relational database; and

retrieving from said desired entity instance table [means] specified by said [retrieved] desired entity type record said [selected] desired entity, wherein said [selected] desired entity comprises a record identified by said [retrieved] desired record identifier in said desired entity instance table [means].

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8̶3̶. (Amended) The method of Claim 8̶2̶ 4 wherein the step of retrieving a specific relation instance record comprises:

retrieving from said specific relation type record a table identifier wherein said table identifier identifies a specific relation instance table in said relation instance table means; and

retrieving from said specific relation instance table said specific relation instance record[.] based on said specific relation type record and said provided entity.

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8̶4̶. (Amended) The method of Claim 8̶2̶ 4 further comprising the step of retrieving from inquiry table means data specifying said [specified] provided relation type prior to the step of retrieving a specific relation type record[.], wherein said data is used in said step of retrieving from relation instance means to determine said specific relation instance record.

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8̶5̶. (Amended) The method of Claim 8̶2̶ 4 further comprising the step of retrieving from inquiry table means data specifying said [specified] provided entity prior to the step of retrieving a relation specific instance record[.], wherein said data is used in said step of retrieving from relation instance

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